

Remember to produce it properly. Be on the case every minute of the day.

Play to your strengths – don't hang onto a bit of the process if it's not your strong point.

Don't let psychological differences get in the way if you're dealing with a foreign partner.

Planning is vital. If it's planned right it comes in on time and on budget. It's your own money you're wasting!

Most important thing you can do in any co-pro: Go to your partner's office/studio at least once to set up key processes. Face to face meetings are vital! Meet the key teams – writers, story-boarders etc. It's vital people management. Set down the process – is it theirs or yours? Write up a bible for each part of the production process.

Be one team not two companies – a psychological step which makes a big difference. Showed some key frames and scenes where the animators hadn't composited the same backgrounds – their process didn't have the right organisation. We lost so much time in the first 3 months – we should have gone there and we would have seen the flaws in their process.

Maintaining relationships: watch email tone, praise when it's due, conf call rather than email once a week, listen and understand to their notes and thoughts.

It's great doing co-pros!

Questions:

On Wibbly Pig we did everything up to animatic stage in the UK: they did animation, came back to us to do picture-post.

On our other project Flory (GREG CHECK?) 70% was done in South Africa in order to get the funding. We do a lot of self analysis after productions so we don't repeat mistakes.

How do you make stuff in the UK without co-pro? It's simply not possible. Though maybe tax breaks will help a bit. By doing a co-pro 52 eps cost £2.2 million – doing it just in the UK would cost a million more.

100 thousand girls watch this each week. 15000 comments on Stardoll TV. Integrated sponsorship from different brands. TV show has six strands per episode, one strand sponsor already on board is a skin care client. They only need one sponsor to fund the show's budget.

'We want to be across all the platforms. From phones to Facebook to Twitter.'

They also showed an ad-funded multi platform event – Beat the Designer. (ethos of important messages they want to deliver underneath, 'we work with NSPCC, Childline etc') a competition where 9 lucky winners met London's top designers.

Questions – what's the revenue model? We make money from parents who buy subscriptions - £34 per year (200 stardollars per month).

TV – is the model just based on UK? Opening in US later in the year with their crews in LA. Second territory is Poland. Long term aspirations? Will you commission content maybe? 'The girls tell us what they want to see' – yes if people come up with ideas to engage with the audience. Maybe we'll have different channels in the future... Any editorial agendas beyond sales? We will age up the site and maybe go less pink... up to a more 16-24 age group.

Co-production Case Studies – the Real Deal

Will Brenton - Wish Films

Brief history of Wish and its roots in Tell-Tale Productions.

We take published properties and develop them as international co-productions.

Showed Wiggly Pig. UK has been slow getting happy with co-productions. I'm going to talk about what it feels like to do one.

First thought – what do we have to give up? Well, to some degree Control. We also feel like we'll have to work with people with less expertise. Vision – sometimes you have to accept you have to compromise that a bit. Copyright – not so important as some people think.

You might get headaches and compromise BUT you might also get expertise, finance and freshness of viewpoint (too often we hear in a bad way at markets 'it's nice but very British').

It's easy to get lost in a co-production.

How do you choose your partner? Main reason – the financial package. So many possible partners and deals: French Belgian, Canadian etc. Make sure it adds up. It's easy to get carried away with what finances are around, or applied for, or triggered by what you spend. Treaties can be complicated.

Canadian co-pro for instance needs a lot of thinking. Contractually expect a big lawyer's bill. Do your homework: is there a template for a deal or can you invent one? Ask the question: Who cashflows it?

Other considerations. Language can be a problem. Time zones can be very wearing on development and production. Quality of work – it's easy to forget the quality. Check out their company CV. Look around for state funding: Wales and Ireland for example have interesting film funds.

Having picked your territory then you pick the studio. We got them to audition – studios will do this if millions depend on it. Shows tests from Wiggly Pig and also Flory (GREG CHECK?0. And then the results of Wish's giving feedback: shows how important giving notes and getting the right results back is.

Work split – what do you keep and why.

Don't fight a corner on a principle – keep the door open, don't assume they're not as good as you.

Make the split work.

Broadcaster's job is to sell audiences to advertisers. The web is shortening the chain – production companies have to start thinking about building audiences for advertisers. There are ways you can do this so you're not just a corporate shill. Nick talked broadly about who is playing games and what kind of game they're playing. eg 85 million people played Farmville yesterday... check out the stats on appdata.com

We're all gamers now! If you're a TV production company you need to have an interactive side.

Why does it matter? As Lord Puttnam said recently to the audience at a games conference – the future of our survival as a species is in your hands. Games are not just an entertainment medium. The Wii has brought families in... Parents play with their kids in co-op style. We're also beginning to see a shift towards non competitive games.

Showed a graph of Moshi Monsters – now 15 million players.

Advertisers will be at the forefront of making 'TV games' succeed, not the big movie blockbuster games. The old way that it worked in TV was: Pitch get commission make 25% profit, pitch get commission make the next one... There are now many new models for getting revenue but in the kids' world probably subscriptions is the most appropriate. Certainly in the world of games virtual goods will probably be the dominant monetiser in the next couple of years.

Go to where the audiences are...

Making web games is not like TV production. Invest in something which makes a continuing revenue stream alongside your game. Spend the money on 'doing' not pitching – the more you get stuff done before you get the money the better.

'Free' wins – it's an effective marketing strategy. If you're not free you're competing with the big money.

FARM is the key way to think of your customers: FOCUS, ACQUIRE, RETAIN, MONETISE.

Anyone can be a publisher these days. Here's the golden rule: Step 1 – Try. Step 2 - Repeat step 1...

Creating a Successful Online Property

Stardoll

Katie Bell & Suzy Goodall

53 million users. Stardoll was the idea of a Finnish woman whose gamer sons inspired her to make paperdoll heaven. A destination for virtual dressing up, celebrity, shopping. Growing by 45000 a day, already in 19 languages, 50% of 10 to 19 in the UK know of it.

Girls come in and create a me-doll which they can take to the virtual shopping plaza. Girls really get to understand their own style without spending real money.

They have an up to date insight into teenage girls in the UK, 'we got 5000 of our users to respond to a detailed survey, talking through their TV and web usage'.

Then showed a video of what members think of Stardoll.

Already expanding is Stardoll TV which runs online. It's about fame, fashion, friends and family. Who's paying for the tv show? Clients will sponsor strands or segments. Will be morally and socially valuable as well as commercially valuable. Showed a video of clips from Stardoll TV, a magazine style segment covering a fun shop trip for a party, turning on the Xmas lights in London, meeting the X-Factor stars.

Productions

- *Cell* was originally an O2 commission for mobile. But Endemol retained the rights and then sold them on to different territories in different formats.
- *Kirill* was part funded by MSN Marketing. The pitch they bought would have made a show that was way too expensive. So instead Sean made ten episodes of a prequel that was cheaper. The original idea might now find a life with good related material already out on the market.
- *Gap Year* was a factual/reality project which had 13 different sponsors. Each one was a different package – one was 300K. Some of these wanted product placement, some wanted product integration, some wanted to get across their brand message. Each traveller in the project was tagged with sponsorship. Doritos, Canon, Activa, Colgate. Playstation, for example, built up a fan-base they didn't expect.

This is a relatively new area for advertisers. But we now have a value model we can explain to brands. In this world the producer has to do the hard selling as well as the producing. The latest news is that people are beginning to invest again after an advertising blip.

Rachel Mordecai explained that she works in the “digital and brand space”. She tries to keep what she wants to do at the core of each project and then get the funding and its associated obligations as wrap-around stuff – e.g. make an app so she can fund a show.

- The niche that works now is teen drama.
- Major sponsors, minor sponsors and lifestyle sponsors are the three keys

Audience questions to Sean and Rachel:

How do you talk to Beebo?

Go straight to the marketing department, the higher up the chain you go the more chance of getting a decision. But they won't give you money, they'll just give you a commission so you then go and find the money.

Digital budgets are small – is there a shift perceivable?

Advertisers are beginning to part with larger sums of money – to get a million you'll need 20 or 30 different funders. We need to shift perceptions so people don't see online as a secondary medium.

Self-publishing and the Power of 'Free'

Nicholas Lovell - Gamesbrief

There's a shift that's come to games and it's coming fast to TV. Understanding web is key to this change. Games are in two kinds now – the big boxed product akin to today's mega-movies, and the Social Network style games which you find all over the web. GAPPY (Games As Product) games boxed, smartphone, downloads. Industry moving towards GASSY (Games As Service) games – casual, browser, social network.

Showed some clips of Lewis Hamilton Secret Life by nDreams - an alternate reality game. Fully ad-funded gaming. At nDreams we have a guy whose only job is to talk to agencies.

way they talk to creatives (in agencies) is 'we're in charge' but you have to get them to think in a different way. ITV signed off the programmes not Morrisons. You have to manage that relationship and it's a full time job.

- After the commission - you agree a delivery date. But advertisers do it differently from broadcasters. The show had to go out in November. There was no negotiation or slippage. You have to accommodate that.
- You then need to recruit a team that really can do it in five weeks.
- Contracts – they're complicated and expensive three way deals.
- ITV don't cash-flow you so you have to arrange finance for the show.
- We came up with the format – then the title. Make very sure before you name the show that you can buy the dotcom for the title.
- The schedule was tight. We had to sort clearances, the casting of the kids and find the farm location, with accommodation for the kids - all inside 4 weeks.
- Editorial issues were pretty much the same as any show. We worked very hard to make sure it didn't look as if we'd been influenced by the advertiser.
- Our programme was just a small part of the whole activation of the campaign. There was a bonus, though. They built a website for the programme too.
- Through the process they became more and more confident about the 'Farm Camp' brand and their PR and Marketing people did tons of work.
- Editorially we didn't have to compromise. In the end it was a UK programme for UK kids.

Audience questions:

Is it a good idea to have a full time person dealing with the agencies?

Jamila– there's not a problem with the producer talking to advertisers, but once it's done ITV would rather have the conversations because we tend to have the facts to hand and we don't want muddled negotiations.

Who did you deal with at Morrisons?

Paul - It was all organised by ITV. But really it's the agency you deal with, not the company.

The difference between sponsorship and ad funding?

Katherine - sponsorship – the advertiser just pays for the bumpers and the money goes to ITV.

Advertiser funding is when they're actually paying for the show to be made and they get also their advertising around the show.

New Financing Models on New Platforms

Sean Coleman & Rachel Mordecai

Sean Coleman explained that for the past few years he's been making online drama and factual at Endemol - still using the same people as in TV but for half the budget. It's great content on small platforms. We convince platform owners that they're broadcasters. There are lots of good ways to get money to fund shows – sponsorship, advertising, product placement, contra....

- Katherine's team's role is to talk to the agencies on a regular basis. Like speed dating, melding commissioners and advertisers.
- They did 12 partnerships in 2012 – and are open to new funding models.
- AFPs create standout and reach, these are big benefits, like sponsorship. The funder gets the bumpers around the show, which is a key benefit.
- A sponsor might pay 30k or 40k for bumpers but actually funding shows could cost 8 times this much. Agencies can't really measure the exact benefits of this yet. But – reach and personality are benefits.
- A share of the format rights or IP is also good business for the funder, giving the opportunity of overseas sales of format rights too.
- But ITV have to be explicit sometimes - you can't use the show to sell stuff.
- Naming rights are key – e.g. 'Britvic Skillicious'.
- ITV Commercial tell advertisers - talk to us early and we will check commissioner interest.
- They also hold some seminars for production companies and agencies to get them up to speed. "We are keen that it's not just a money deal to cover the funding."
- We want to also push the viewers online so we can build a complete package.

Tips:

- Involve us early – if you need help finding funding we might know the right advertiser.
- Think about the extra factor – what else could we give the brand to own and use? Special content maybe?
- Getting commercial agencies and commissioners together is key.
- Be flexible in order to get the commission
- Think about what brands fit your shows.

Paul Shuttleworth told the producer's story

"We're an indie. We're always looking to collaborate and survive. Last year we produced 8 hours of telly, but that's not enough. We used to get production fees, but not anymore. However, to get a fully funded programme is amazing. CITV are making a big impact in the market doing this. Here's a secret - submit ideas – that's how you get commissions!"

On this project.

- We already had a passion about food and farming.
- We got interested in Morrisons and found out about them. They were making big profits and they were exciting. Their 'Lets Grow' campaign was very much of the moment. Lots of common ground, so we felt comfortable.
- We'd meet Morrisons weekly: they had high expectations, they expected answers. My relationship was with their creative agency. They have a different view of the broadcaster as they are a customer, not, as we are, a supplier.
- Morrisons were excited by the TV production. But an important thing to remember as a producer if you are working with a corporate funder is that you are not their ad agency. The

- Morrisons approached ITV's commercial sales team and gave them a list of objectives. They wanted a show that would promote their 'Let's Grow' campaign: this gave out school vouchers which could be exchanged by customers for gardening gear.
- Jamila's team put together a programme brief to fit Morrison's objectives which they sent out to key producers. There was a very tight timescale, just one week for ideas.
- 3 ideas were eventually selected – and Paul Shuttleworth's (Handle and Spout) was chosen. Paul had in fact brought an idea to CITV a year before about a city farm for younger children. At the time it hadn't been quite right, but CITV now were able to develop it with Paul to fit the brief for older children. "If programme ideas come in that might be suitable to attract sponsorship we keep them and show them to the advertiser as they come along."
- Jamila stressed that "editorial control stays with us throughout".
- Morrisons agreed to fully fund the series.
- The result was 'an increased association of Morrisons with Let's Grow – more kids would pester parents for the vouchers in-store'.
- From CITV's standpoint – "We got a free show".

Skillicious – a different model

- Foundation and RDF came to ITV with the programme idea. They then went out and spoke directly to advertisers - when they had secured some funding they came back to ITV.
- The series was part funded by the advertiser.
- This is an acceptable model for ITV: if you feel you have a project that suits an advertiser you can go to them first. But - once you've agreed interest from an advertiser the project has to be handed over to the ITV sales team and your relationship becomes purely editorial.
- In the case of Britvic, ITV Compliance were more involved than usual because of high sugar, salt, and fat regulation. Fruitshoots h2o was chosen as the product because it is not high in sugar.
- Unlike Farm Camp there was a long run-up time - 3 months.
- The schedule depends on the advertiser's campaign cycle – the programme makers have to work around the advertiser.

Key take-aways:

- There are multiple models
- There has to be a need for the programming at ITV.
- CITV are looking to build their preschool live action.
- And always looking for comedy drama, though budgets are tight and AFP does not produce drama budgets.

ITV Commercial's role

- Katherine Marlow explained her role is to be the central point of contact for any deals.
- AFPs are 'content partnerships'.
- Ad agencies as well as media agencies are beginning to get the idea.
- Agencies now have teams looking at this area.

Innovative Funding – Report

The Children’s Media Conference/Northwest Vision and Media

Thursday 25th March 2010 at Northwest Vision and Media, Salford

This was a one-day seminar designed to explore new ways of finding finance for projects in the children’s and youth markets. It explored traditional broadcasters and their new thinking and business models on new platforms, with in addition a final expansion of a previous day’s theme – international co-production.

The seminar was produced and introduced by Anthony Utley

Speakers were:

Jamila Metran, Programme Manager, CITV

Katherine Marlow, ITV Commercial Creative Solutions and Content Partnership Planner, ITV Commercial

Paul Shuttleworth, **Creative Director**, Handle and Spout

Rachel Mordecai, Interactive producer/writer and consultant

Sean Coleman, Interactive producer/writer, Red Kingdom

Nicholas Lovell, Consultant, Gamesbrief

Katie Bell, Commercial Director, Stardoll Network

Suzy Goodall, Producer/director, Stardoll TV

Will Brenton, Founder and Director, Wish Films

Advertiser Funded Programming

Jamila Metran, Katherine Marlow and Paul Shuttleworth

Jamila introduced a show-reel of mini CITV and CITV school kids output. Their offering is unique because they provide pre-school and 4-12 on one channel. Their mantra: “We believe in a kid’s right to have fun!” Jamila stressed that they still have a budget for commissioning. This is enhanced by building deals in advance for advertiser funded shows.

In 2009 they broadcast 4:

- *Green Up Your Life* - 10x11 minutes. Fully funded by the advertiser, British Gas
- *Wild World* - 10 episodes from Maverick TV funded by Kids Activity Days
- *Skillicious* – 8 episodes of a studio based entertainment series. Advertiser- Britvic Fruitshoots
- *Farm Camp* - 10 episodes which took city kids and turned them into farmers in ten days. Advertiser – Morrisons

The latter two in more detail:

Farm Camp